

The Supreme Court decided, at the beginning of this year, that it was acceptable and legal for the largest corporations in our country to spend unlimited resources supporting candidates who represent their interests, elevating corporations to the status of flesh-and-blood persons for constitutional purposes. So let me make a very bold and radical statement right now. I know many corporations. I know who they are. Let me tell my colleagues: A corporation is not a person. A corporation is not a person. It is totally absurd to suggest that a corporation should have the first amendment rights of individual Americans.

What the Supreme Court decision has done is to turn our media during campaigns into even more of a circus and undermines State election laws across the country that provide some small buffer between wealth and power. They have unleashed the vast coffers of corporate America by allowing them to spend whatever they want—unlimited sums of money—from their general bank accounts, not just their PACs and not just on sham issue ads but on telling people outright which candidate to vote for, something this country has not seen since 1947.

Big money corporate interests from Wall Street to oil giants, from drug companies to the military industrial complex, already dominate the political process in Washington. It is inconceivable to me that not one Republican—not one Republican today—voted to minimize the horrendous Supreme Court decision which will allow corporations to put unlimited funds into campaign advertising with no disclosure whatsoever—no disclosure whatsoever.

I think the American people must be wondering this afternoon what, to our Republican friends, could be wrong with some simple checks on campaign spending such as the following: requiring the CEO of a corporation that spends on campaign-related activity to stand by the ad they have produced and say that he or she “approves this message.” If the Presiding Officer was running for office or I am running for office and we put an ad on television, that is what we have to say. I think it is a good idea. If you put something ugly on television, you say: I approved this message. If you put something dishonest on the air, people have a right to know that you are the person responsible for that ad. If you have to be responsible for that ad, if I have to be responsible for that ad, if every other candidate for the Senate has to be responsible for that ad, why should not the CEO of a large corporation that is paying for that ad also have to say that he or she approves this message?

It is no great secret that a lot of money from abroad is being invested in American corporations. In a situation where a company which has a lot of foreign money in it, why should we allow that company to get actively involved in American politics? What the

legislation that we voted on today does, which I think makes a lot of sense, is it prohibits a corporation that is under the direction or control of a foreign entity from spending money on our elections. I don't think that is an unreasonable provision. I don't think we want our political process to be dominated by people who may not have the best interests of the people of the United States of America at heart.

Another provision requires disclosure of political spending by corporations and other entities to their shareholders and members and requires these groups to make their political spending public on their Web sites within 24 hours after filing with the FEC. Why should the people who actually own the stock in those companies not be able to know in a timely manner what the CEOs of these corporations are doing so they can say: Excuse me, you can't do that with my money. I don't like that. I think what you are doing is wrong.

Another provision in this legislation would ban coordination between a candidate and outside groups on ads that reference a candidate from the time period beginning 90 days before a primary and running through the general election.

Another provision would avoid the appearance of corruption and possible misuse of taxpayer funds by banning government contractors with a contract worth more than \$10 million from spending money on elections.

I think these are simple, straightforward provisions. I think they are right. I have a very hard time understanding how we could not get one Republican vote in support of these provisions.

My hope is that the Democratic leadership will not give up on this issue. I think the American people, before Citizens United, were frustrated and disgusted with the role big money plays in the political process, disgusted with the power big money interests have on influencing legislation, and I think they are now even more disgusted as a result of the Citizens United decision. We have brought forth legislation which I think is straightforward, I think it is sensible, I think it needs to be passed, and I hope we will continue that effort to get it passed.

With that, I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HAGAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IN PRAISE OF ALISON McNALLY

Mr. KAUFMAN. Madam President, I rise today to recognize another of

America's great Federal employees. This will be Federal employee No. 89.

In 1829, a British scientist who had never set foot in our country bequeathed to the American people his estate in order to create “an establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge.” That he did so is a reminder of what this young country represented to those around the world who yearned for liberty and an approach to government based on wisdom and science.

James Smithson's gift continues to enrich Americans' lives to this day in the form of the Smithsonian Institution. The millions of Americans who have visited the 19 Smithsonian museums, the National Zoo, and the over 150 affiliated institutions can attest to the value of the Smithsonian. Since its founding by Congress 163 years ago next month, the Smithsonian Institution has helped expose the American people to the arts and sciences.

Some of its museums have been traditional stops for families to bring their children when visiting Washington, such as the Air and Space Museum, the National Museum of American History, and the National Portrait Gallery. Many of us here can recall exploring them in our youth.

I can remember when I lived in Washington for 2 years after the Second World War. We didn't visit anything, and then, in the last 2 weeks, my mother took me and my sisters and we went on a tour of all the different museums in town. It was fantastic, and it is even much better today.

Other Smithsonian museums have joined them in recent years or are under construction today. The National Museum of the American Indian—a beautiful new building with wonderful, educational exhibits—is celebrating its 5-year anniversary.

The successful operation of this network of museums and galleries and the preservation of its treasures relies on the more than 4,000 dedicated Federal employees on its staff. There are dedicated, smart, hard-working employees on the Smithsonian staff.

Alison McNally is one of them—and a great one at that. As the Smithsonian's Under Secretary for Finance and Administration, Alison supervises a number of departments, including: the Office of Facilities Engineering and Operations, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, the Smithsonian Archives, the Office of Human Resources, and the Office of the Chief Information Officer.

In this capacity, she plays an important role in the day-to-day operations of the Smithsonian, helping to ensure that it continues to provide the services Americans and foreign visitors have long enjoyed. Earlier, Alison served as the Smithsonian's senior executive officer in the office of the Under Secretary for Science. In that position, she directly oversaw a number of scientific research support programs.